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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CHISINAU 000840

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STATE FOR EUR/UMB

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/22/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [MD](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S INTRODUCTORY MEETING WITH  
MINISTER OF DEFENSE MARINUTA

Classified by: Ambassador Asif J. Chaudhry for  
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: On October 15, the Ambassador, Defense Attache, and Chief of the Office of Defense Cooperation paid an introductory call on Minister of Defense Vitalie Marinuta. The new Minister outlined his plan to reform the Moldovan military along NATO PfP lines and requested continued assistance from U.S. defense advisors. He also said his ministry was researching possible peacekeeping and peace support operations with the United Nations, OSCE, and other organizations. End Summary.

New Start for MOD  
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¶2. (C) During the October 15 meeting, Minister of Defense Vitalie Marinuta evaluated the Alliance for European Integration's victory as the start of a new time for Moldovan-U.S. cooperation and the beginning of a directional change towards European integration. The Minister said that he has the full support of acting President Ghimpu, Prime Minister Filat, and Parliament, and that he wants to actively reform the military along NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) lines at all levels from the strategic defense review to tactical unit level training.

¶3. (C) Marinuta stated that he will request continued assistance from U.S. Naval Post Graduate (NPS) Center for Civilian Military Relations (CCMR) advisors along with similar advice from United Kingdom defense sector experts. Saying that he was speaking as a former Army Special Forces officer, Marinuta also thanked the Ambassador for the upcoming U.S. Special Forces Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) scheduled from October 20 to November 20 and stated he believed it to be important for instilling tactical level training in the Moldovan military. He also requested an After Action Review (AAR) following the training to capture lessons learned.

Resolving Transnistria Question  
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¶4. (C) Minister Marinuta said he will also assist the government in seeking a resolution to the Transnistrian issue. He agreed with the Ambassador that Moldova must maintain its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Marinuta also agreed that the 5+2 negotiations were the accepted mechanism, and added that he would even favor a "7+0" format, in which the U.S. and EU would be given the status as equal mediators in

the process. The Minister also stated that he believes the establishment of a truly prosperous and democratic Moldova was the only way to attract the Transnistrian breakaway region to reconcile.

¶15. (C) The Minister also expressed support for turning over Russian control of the Moldovan peacekeeping mission to OSCE. He conceded that the Moldovan military has limited visibility in Transnistria and although the Ministry had not perceived of any recent changes concerning the Russian presence there, he believed there would be in the future.

#### Moldova and Peacekeeping

¶16. (C) The Ambassador urged Marinuta to consider international peacekeeping operations to increase Moldova's visibility on the world stage, to assist with defense reform, and as a potential source of income. Marinuta agreed and said the Ministry was researching possible peacekeeping and peace support operations with the United Nations, OSCE, and other organizations. The Minister said that Moldova will participate in such an operation after a review of the Ministry's existing capabilities and in accordance with political decision makers' direction.

#### Request on IMET

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¶17. (C) Marinuta mentioned two changes regarding administrative personnel matters he would like to see for the Ministry of Defense. The Minister requested the Ambassador change the existing U.S. policy which reserved the right of the U.S. Embassy to make the final determination in the selection of International Military Education and Training (IMET) candidates. The Ambassador said such a change was not possible due to existing U.S. administrative requirements. Marinuta also informed the Ambassador that he was considering changes in the military salary system to encourage reform.

¶18. (C) Minister Marinuta concluded by recognizing the fact that although the Alliance government and Ministry of Defense had public support, the government understood that it needed to move quickly to ensure immediate successes. He again asked for U.S. assistance in these endeavors and thanked the Ambassador for his support.

CHAUDHRY